

SAN RAMON VALLEY

GENEALOGICAL

SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 305
Diablo, CA 94528-8308
President: Barbara Dittig
Coord. Editor: Sharon Clay
Meetings: 10:00 a.m.
3rd Tues. Of the Month
(Except August & December)
Alamo LDS Church
Stone Valley & Smith Roads - Alamo

Vol. XVII No. 9

April 2003

THIS MONTH -APRIL 15, 2003

Italian Research

Our April speaker is Jerry Goggiel who will be speaking on Italian research. He has been highly recommended by other genealogical societies. He has made numerous trips to Italy and has learned to speak Italian. His interest in Italian research stems from having Italian maternal grandparents. His emphasis will be on obtaining and reading documents. Bring your questions, as he will be happy to answer them.

LAST MEETING - March 18, 2003

Planning a Family Reunion

Speaker - Ed Mason - notes by Lee Schlenker

Ed Mason, one of our own members was our speaker for the month of March. He had many of us "ooh-ing" and "aah-ing" over his accomplishment of organizing his family reunion! Ed supplied us with his own home video along with his talk-over and background music of how this family reunion was accomplished plus a great guideline handout. It was impressive to say the least. With 280 relatives to send invitations to he kept very busy! Ed has a considerably high level of video skills as well as organization skills. Both were extremely important to this reunion. There may be other guidelines below which you might find helpful.

He was in charge of putting together his wife's McDonald Family Reunion in July, 2002 (Saturday - Sunday) in Amenia, NY (where the original immigrants settled). Previous reunions usually had 60 family members attending, but Ed's idea was to include ALL the descendants of Michael and Mary Jane McDonald. They ended up by finding 280 persons and 57% of those attended.

He had to do the following things very early in the process:

- ◆ define the family
- ◆ determine the interest and who could help with the process
- ◆ choose a location, date and duration
- ◆ find suitable/affordable lodging for attendees
- ◆ determine finances (keeping costs down was

important as he wanted as many as possible to attend) - a \$10 registration fee was charged on the first day, \$18 for the buffet luncheon (less for children) after Mass. Overnight stays were up to the attendees, but a hotel/motel list was provided to them. It was necessary to take three trips to Amenia, NY to accomplish most of this.

Then he selected committee heads such as: reception, finance, decorations, children's activities, logistics, church service, photographers, videographers as well as a still photographer. He created a Board of Directors to oversee all these committee heads. Ed kept in contact by e-mail. A total of three mailings were made prior to the reunion and then one after the reunion for informational input.

The extras that were provided were: 1) laminated badges on an elastic cord with the attendee's name, family names, generation number and on the back was that person's pedigree chart linking him/her to the family; 2) picture posters for the wall decorations; 3) family tree poster (which turned out to be 28 feet long); 4) family history in a 1 hour video (sold for \$5); 5) printed tee shirts (sold for \$9); 6) loosely bound book on the family history (sold for \$6)

Ed allowed a good month to create the ancestral history home video. It included a time-line from the original immigrants forward, newspaper articles found at the local library and some from relatives, e-mail information sent, personal interviews, copied census

records, still photos, cemetery views, old places of work found in the local newspaper archives, copied pages from the city directories. He also created a written script to match each segment, made sure the video was about 1 hour in length and added appropriate music to the mix.

An agenda was set for the reunion and fine tuned a few months before the actual reunion:

Saturday - 3:00 registration, and guided tours to the historic McDonald sites; 5:30 a no-host dinner at a local restaurant.

Sunday - 9:00 a.m. a private McDonald Mass; 9:45 coffee and tea at the church; 10:20 self-guided tour of cemetery; 11:00 reunion started at a designated place (a local country club) with family introductions, lunch, children's activities (there were 36 kids from age 16 on down), showing of the documentary video. Another feature was "Meet Your New Buddy" time (a pre-assigned pairing for each attendee to meet someone from the family they didn't know or hadn't met before. Then there was a social mixer and at 4:00 p.m. the reunion ended.

The reunion was very successful! Another one is being planned for summer 2005. The video was a huge hit. The general consensus was that more time is needed to meet with everyone; more inexpensive housing is needed; and the other side of the family should be found and invited also.

There was one very key element - three important people from generation #4 who continually kept up the spirits and kept people motivated. They helped push people to take the step forward and come to the reunion. He hopes these people will be there again for the 2005 reunion.

Note: Ed has generously donated two cassettes to our Cassette Library regarding this reunion. Don't forget to check them out.

SRVGS CALENDAR APRIL 2003

1 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. Board Meeting at the home of President, Barbara Dittig on Jacaranda Drive in Danville.

15 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. General Meeting at LDS Church, 2949 Stone Valley Road at Smith Road, in Alamo. From I-680 freeway, take Stone Valley Road east 2 & 1/2 miles.

17 Thursday - 10:00 a.m. Member Education Class presented by Fran Lloyd. The subject will be "Other than Census Records at the National Archives." What percentage of your time at the National Archives has been spent looking for one type of record? Fran will let us know what other types of records are there and how to search for them. There are more than just census records at the National Archives. Note that there will be a Library Trip to the National Archives on the following Wednesday. Sign-up at the general meeting and attend this class at 210 Town and Country Drive in Danville. If you also plan to attend the afternoon meeting, you may bring a bag lunch and please call Fran at 837-9382.

17 Thursday - 1:00 p.m. This is a follow-up, of group meetings held since last September. How would you present your material to share or distribute your research findings? This non-published group will meet again at Fran Lloyd's home, 210 Town & Country Drive in Danville. Members that did not attend the prior meetings, but wish to attend this meeting, please call Fran Lloyd at 837-9382. Plan on attending this session if you have attended any of the previous group meetings.

23 Wednesday - 9:00 a.m. Library trip to the National Archives in San Bruno. Carpools will meet behind Albertson's, off Diablo Road in Danville. Departures are prompt. Please sign up at the general meeting. However, if you wish to join the group or wish to cancel, please call Louise Ford, (925) 376-4587. Please note that this trip is scheduled on a Wednesday. The National Archives are open until 8 p.m. on Wednesdays. Depending on the driver, a carpool group could stay longer than the usual 3 p.m.. Immigration records, Military Service records and regional court records are types of records to search for, in addition to the Federal Census. Phone (650) 876-9009 or visit www.nara.gov.

MAY 2003

6 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. Board Meeting at the home of President, Barbara Dittig on Jacaranda Drive in Danville

20 Tuesday – 10:00 a.m. General Meeting at the LDS Church on Stone Valley Road.

A Member Education Class will be given by Pat Isom at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road. The subject will be Land Records and Genealogical Research. (Date open at this printing)

27 Tuesday – 9:00 a.m. The Library trip will be to the Napa Genealogical Library, 1701 Menlo Ave. There will be a small non-member user fee.
<http://members.napanet.net/%7Envgbs/>

Member Special Interest Groups: APRIL/MAY

COMPUTER INTEREST GROUP - They will NOT meet during April. This is a genealogy software users group for PC's and focus on the use of Master Genealogist. Peggy Dearman is the contact person for the group. Phone 837-1621 or e-mail, dearman@pacbell.net. They will meet at her home in May.

GERMAN – The German group will meet on Wednesday April 23rd (the fourth Wednesday) at 10:00 a.m.. This meeting will be at the home of Helen Odegard. If you need directions, or cannot attend, please call Helen 932-6796, or e-mail her at s_hodie@pacbell.net. Any member of the society is welcome. The group coordinator is Fran Schweitzer (925) 935-5744 or e-mail FranSchw@pacbell.net.

INTERNET – Interested users communicate via e-mail. They do not hold regular meetings. The coordinator is Jack Johnson Phone 837-2153 or e-mail, jackmj@earthlink.net. Two new member-users were welcomed last meeting.. Internet users may join this group by sending an e-mail request to jackmj@earthlink.net Use "SRVGS internet user" as a subject.

IRISH. – Their meeting dates will be April 9 and May 14, (second Wednesday) at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Patty Erickson, 10 Ridge Place in Pleasant Hill. Phone 229-0889. Her e-mail address is russpat@netvista.net

SOUTHERN – This group will meet April 8 and May 13, (Second Tuesday of the month) at 10:00 a.m. at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road, in Alamo. The contact person is Dorothy Stanton, Phone 820-3757 or e-mail dpstant@hotmail.com.

The following is a list of **Special Interest Groups that are currently inactive**. The name and phone number of the group contact person is also listed:

MAC Computer users – Barbara Dittig, phone 648-9364 or e-mail bdittig@aol.com.

NEW ENGLAND – Barbara Dyer, phone 820-9738 or e-mail bdyergen@aol.com.

PORTUGUESE – Millie Freitas, phone 837-2483.

SCANDINAVIA – Marilyn Tanner, phone 376-6733 or e-mail jtanner@nothingbutnet.net.

PUBLISHING – Dorothy Stanton, phone 820-3757 or e-mail dpstant@hotmail.com. If you are ready to organize your material into a format for publishing, printing or distribution, contact this group. A group of interested members will meet again on April 17 as noted above. If you are interested in meeting with this group, please phone Fran Lloyd, 837-9382.

CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS

12 April Saturday The Sacramento Genealogical Society (Root Cellar) will sponsor a seminar featuring Barbara Renick.
www.rootsweb.com/~carcgs/rootcellar.html

12 April Saturday The San Mateo County Genealogical Society will meet at 10 a.m. at the First Presbyterian Church, 25th Ave and Hacienda. Pam Dallas will speak about Cemetery Research. Open to the public and free.

17 April Thursday The Santa Clara County Historical and Genealogical Society will meet at 7 p.m. at the Santa Clara Central Library, 3345 Lochinvar. Marcia Holstrom will speak about Geography in Genealogy. Open to the public and free.

19 April Saturday The Tuolumne County Genealogical Society will sponsor a seminar featuring George Schweitzer. Advance registration required by calling (209) 536-0574 or visit www.tcgsonline.org

19 April Saturday The Sacramento Multi-stake Family History Center will sponsor a spring seminar at 2745 Eastern Ave. in Sacramento. Classes will be held from 9 a.m. to 3:20 p.m. in 9 rooms. Fee is \$ 8 to pre-register or \$ 12 at the door. Emphasis will be on genealogy software and "Computing Your Ancestry". Look for a flyer at the general meeting and visit the website at familyhistorycenter.info

23 April Wednesday The Diablo Valley Mac Users Group will meet 10 a.m. to noon at 3333 Vincent Road in Pleasant Hill. This is a Genealogy interest group that meets regularly on the fourth Wednesday of each month. For further information, phone (925) 938-4544.

16 May Friday A workshop will be held at the National Archives in San Bruno. Passenger Arrival and Naturalization Records will be presented by Rose Mary Kennedy. \$15 is payable in advance. Phone (650) 876-9009 to reserve a space.

26 July Saturday Cyndi Howell will be a guest speaker at the Pennington Research Association conference to be held in San Rafael. \$35 registration fee. Visit www.penningtonresearch.org

Newsletter Team

Coordinator: Sharon Clay	462-4518
	sharoncl@ix.netcom.com
Calendar Coordinator: Vern Segelke	828-8570
	vmseg3@greaterbaynet.com
Special Contributor: Pat Isom	820-2660
Mailing: Lucy Carver	837-3156
Deadline to put information in the newsletter is the last Thursday of the month.	

Membership Update:

Barbara Dittig's new e-mail: bdittig@comcast.net
 Change of address for Virginia Sheetz:
 9199 Fircrest Lane 3176
 San Ramon, CA 94583



NEWS FROM THE CASSETTE LIBRARIAN - Betty Vail

The following cassette tapes have been donated by Frances Lloyd and can be checked out at the Cassette Library Table before the meeting, or during the break.

Thank you Francie!

- C-255 Who's in Charge? Leadership Strategies For Presidents & Vice Presidents -
by Marsha Hofman Rising RP-FGS93, W-23
- C-256 Using Tax Rolls To Prove Births, Deaths & Marriages, Parentage & Origins
by Elizabeth Shown Mill RP-FGS93, T-36
- C-257 Genealogical Research in St. Louis
by Edward E. Steele RP-FGS93, T-44
- C-258 Researching Colonial German-Speaking Emigrants: The Kraichgau & the Palatine
Annette K. Burgert RP-FGS93, T-46
- C-259 Are Your Pennsylvania German (Dutch) Ancestors Really Swiss?
Annette K. Burgert RP-FGS93, F-67
- C-260 Where Were They Before They Got Here?
Tracing Population Movements in England-
Using Case Studies
Dean J. Hunter RP-FGS93, F-68
- C-261 Getting The Most From A Research Trip To Richmond, VA
Eric G. Grundset RP-FGS93, F-98
- C-262 The North Carolina "How to Lecture" What You Need To Know To Find Your Tarheel Ancestor
by Helen F.M. Leary RPFGS93, S-126

How to Reach the Board Members:

President: Barbara Dittig	648-9364
	e-mail: bdittig@comcast.net
1 st Vice President - Barbara Johnson	837-2153
2 nd Vice President: (Program)	
Bob Kay	945-7426
Carol Thompson	820-4103
Frank Williams	283-6135
3 rd Vice President (Membership)	
John Lemak	932-3957
Recording Secretary: Virginia Rood	937-8659
Treasurer: Marilynn Tanner	376-6733
Parliamentarian: Frances Lloyd	837-9382

Presidents Message by Barbara Dittig

This month's library trip was to the Sutro Library in San Francisco. It had been some time since I had done research at the library, and I was looking forward to breaking down one of my "brick walls". But once again, my elusive ancestor (the father of Jacob Heater) was not to be found. I went back to a county history that said that Jacob was born in Pickaway Co., OH in 1809 and his father, Jacob was also born there. I had been looking at this accounting for almost 20 years, wanting to believe that his father was also born in Ohio. Now, most of you are probably quicker at accepting the fact that this just can't be than I. The Ohio Territory was established in 1799 and became a state in 1803. Pickaway Co. was established in 1810, organized from Ross, Fairfield and Franklin Counties. So now that I've shaken off the fact that I've been trying to climb the wrong brick wall, it's time to reorganize my thinking and dig a little deeper. Family Traditions, fact or fiction are common in all families, which brings to mind a story written by one of the members of my Mock Family group. Doug Mauck wrote: "I was told about a great-great uncle, Matthew Mauck, who was said to have been a Major in the Union Army and had shook hands with Abe Lincoln on a battlefield. He lost his right ring finger in a saber fight with a Confederate officer on horseback. (WRONG!)

Research reveals that he was a private who joined the 21st Missouri Volunteer Infantry at age 15. He had thrown a pitchfork at a neighbor's cow and the cow carried the pitchfork home in her ribs. Knowing he was in trouble, Matt joined the army to escape judgement and wrath. After the war, as a garrison private in Alabama, Matt got drunk on guard duty, got in a fight and deserted at age 18. Some Major! It's research that interlinks into history that keeps me looking". >From Mock Family Historian, Vol. IX, #3

It's brick walls and proving or disproving family traditions that keep us delving further into our past. Genealogy research is a stimulating, never ending, filling in the blanks cross-word puzzle! Happy Hunting!

Traci Parent's Quiz

At our February meeting,, speaker Traci Parent distributed this quiz, but didn't get a chance to reveal the answers. Perhaps you'd like to check yours against hers: **True or False:**

1. All information obtained from gravestones should be considered accurate. (False)
2. Water and any tpe of brush can be used to clean gravestones. (False)
3. A mirror can be used to provide more light when photographing gravestones. (True)
4. Any method can be used to repair a gravestone. (False)
5. Shaving cream and chalk can be applied to gravestones to read them better. (False)
6. Gravestones only list the name, birthdate and death date of the individual interred. (False)
7. It is important to seek permission from the cemetery caretaker before conducting any work in a cemetery. (True)
8. When documenting information from gravestones, record the information exactly as it appears. (True)
9. Cemetery records and newspapers can be a great source of information. (True)
10. Gravestones can sometimes provide information found in no other written record. (True)

Slate of Officers

The Nominating Committee would like to present these people who have volunteered to lead the SRVGS for the 2003-2004 year. There are still a couple of positions open, and nominations may be submitted for these and if any one else would like to run for these positions - at the April meeting. Elections will be held in May. Officers take their positions in June.

President	Virginia Rood
1 st Vice President	Open
2 nd Vice President,	Pat Denton, Pat Levy,
Program Committee	Bob Venter
3 rd Vice President: Membership	Dorothy Humpal,
Handbook	Jack Johnson
Recording Secretary	Mary Wright
Corresponding Secretary	Sherri Hedman
Treasurer	Bob Dougherty
Parliamentarian	Barbara Dittig

The newsletter coordinator position is also still available at the time of this printing. If you would like to volunteer to be newsletter coordinator or 1st Vice President, please contact Barbara Johnson 837-2153 or Frances Lloyd. 837-9382.

Making Copies

Have you ever been searching through your genealogy files and came across a great copy of some evidence, but can't figure out where it came from or what it is supposed to support? It seems redundant to constantly repeat "Site Your Sources", but often in our haste we just forget to document where that copy came from on the back. Just what should you put on those copies? In an article in Ancestry Daily News, Michael John Neill gets very detailed about making copies:

"Photocopy the title page of a book to make a quick citation. Make certain to include the following information on the copy of the title page, if it is not on the actual page itself:

- Book Title (the title page should have it, but one never knows)
- Author
- The and place of publication
- Publisher
- Where you located book (not absolutely necessary, but helpful).
- Call number (again not absolutely necessary)

Use the back of the photocopy to take brief research notes in pencil. Add bibliographic information on the title page, if necessary. Also, use this sheet to record negative research results so you don't make the mistake of researching the same thing later on.

Watch the Copies

The old saying is true: haste makes waste. Before making copies, check the machine's page orientation and paper size so the original material can be aligned appropriately. Also look at your photocopies as they come out of the machine to make certain there are no problems (like white streaks due to low toner). If the machine has reduction capabilities, consider copying each page at 95% of the original size. The print will be a little smaller, but this may reduce the chance that you cut off items in the extreme margin of the page.

Citation for Unpublished Local Records

Unpublished records typically have no title page. In some cases the title of the document will be written on the outside of the document itself, potentially along with a filing date and a reference indicating where the document was recorded. For documentation purposes, it is easier to simply photocopy this information from the

outside of the document itself (similar to the title page for a book). If the document has no title, that can be indicated. In some cases it may be obvious from the text of the record what it is.

Sample titles:

- Will of John Rucker
- Divorce Petition of Barbara and Conrad Haase
- Final Estate Report for the estate of Bernard Dirks

In early records, this citation may be as simple as the title of the record book and page number. For some materials, the record may actually be a packet of loose papers or a series of pages. In the second example above, this record is: Haase versus Haase, Divorce case filed November 1872, Circuit court Case File box 231. In the third example it may be:

Estate of Bernard Dirks, Probate Case File 801.

Also, include the office or court that created the records and the current location of the records as part of your "on the fly" citation.

Remember, your citation should get you back to that same document if that need should ever arise. Creating "on the fly" citations with the intent of "getting back to the document" will serve the researcher well. These citations made in the field need not be made in precise bibliographic form, but they should contain the same amount of detail.

Source Linking

Keeping track of sources is important and it is essential that if a number of separate sources are being used that the sources be tracked as the copies are being made - not after you have left the research facility. A stack of loose papers can easily be dropped, resulting in an unorganized mess, hours of wasted time, and the occasional use of colorful language. Also, papers from different resources can be intermingled.

Linking Each Page to Source

I directly link each photocopy to the specific source from which it was obtained very shortly after the copies are made. A "code" is assigned to each source. In unpublished records, I generally considered a source to be a specific document with a record or a case file. For example, a source could be a will from a packet of estate papers, an accounting of the payments from an executor, or a bill of complaint in a court case file.

Continued on Page 7

On the back of the first page copied from this record, I **pencil in** a rough citation for the document. Then, the code for the record is listed along with the page number 1. On the back of each of the remaining pages from this record, I record this same code and the page's respective number. Then, I can easily sort the pages if they are later mixed up. For example, I copied several pages from a court case file in the 1870s. Three records were copied: the petition of the complainant, the master's report, and the judges's decision. Each of these documents was quite lengthy and full of legal verbiage. On the back of the Petition of the Complainant from this case, I wrote:

Petition of complaint, file date, Johann Habben, vs. Antje J. Fecht et al, case file number, Hancock County Circuit Court Records.

I also wrote PC H v. F, page 1 on the back of the first page, Codes PC HvF2, and PCHvF3 etc. were written on the back of subsequent pages. A similar reference structure was used for the master's report and the judges's decision. Since the same person apparently wrote two of these documents, this worked particularly well.

Can't Read It

Avoid the temptation to write directly on the front of the copy itself, especially the part of the copy that includes the original document. If you later make a copy of that copy, will you (or someone else?) Be able to tell what was on the original document and what someone added later? Comments in the margin are easier to distinguish from the original but can still be confusing. Instead, make comments regarding illegible items on the back of the document or on an attached piece of paper.

Plan Ahead

Before I leave home, or while at the facility, I print out book citations from the library's online card catalog. I only put one book on each sheet of paper, then I make research plans for each book on these sheets, and while at the library, I can use these sheets to keep track of what I do and spend even less time writing and copying book titles while at the library (since they are already on the sheets).

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MEMBERSHIP AND RENEWAL APPLICATION 2003-2004

It's time to renew your membership and pay your annual dues which support our educational programs, and provide knowledge to find our ancestors. Please fill out this form and send it with your check made payable to SRVGS to P.O. Box 305, Diablo, CA 94528-8308.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TOWN: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

e-mail: _____ PHONE: _____

\$ _____ Dues: \$15 Single _____ \$20 Family

\$ _____ Donation for Library resources, additions, if desired.

\$ _____ Donation for National Archives Records Admin. (NARA) Records
microfilming project (\$1.00 suggested)

\$ _____ \$2.50 added please, if you desire a handbook/directory sent to your address
and cannot pick one up at a meeting.

_____ Check here if you DO NOT wish a Handbook/Directory, so we won't print unneeded copies.

\$ _____ Total amount of check

Internet Connections

Gateway to Your Irish Ancestry -- New Irish Genealogy Web Site Simplifies the Search for the Best Irish Family History Resources

ProGenealogists, Inc., of Salt Lake City, Utah, has announced the official launching of its Irish Genealogy Web site, <http://ireland.progenealogists.com>

The goal of this new genealogy Web site is to simplify the search for the best online Irish genealogy resources for beginners and experts alike. *From Sue Hanck*

Note: some of the links on this resource are NOT free, so use what you can for nothing.

LIVERPOOL LIBRARY TO BECOME HUGE VIRTUAL ARCHIVES BY 2007

A plan unveiled this month by Liverpool's Central Library may be England's answer to the United States' Family History Library. The Central Library will spend 40 million pounds (about \$64 million) to digitize

millions of archive files and to create a 21st-century heritage center. Digital archives will include Liverpool's charter, birth certificates, school registers, emigration information and much more. It will cost about 10 million pounds (\$16 million) to make the files available on the Internet.

The new heritage center will allow people all over the world to access their family histories online. Both projects should be complete by 2007, Liverpool's 700th anniversary. Visit <http://www.europemedia.net> for further details on this story. For more information on the Liverpool Central Library, go to <http://www.liverpool.gov.uk>. Click on A to Z Council Services, then Libraries. Under How to Find Us, click on Central Library.

From Family Tree Magazine, courtesy of Dorothy Stanton

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FIRST CLASS